

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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AMEMBASSY PARIS
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DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
COMSUFORAZ LAJES FLD AZORES

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 2117

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PGOV PINT PINS PO
SUBJECT: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS: MEETING ON AZORES AND MADEIRA

REF: PONTA DELGADA 76 (DTG 091625Z MAR 77)

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT EANES CONVENED PARTY, GOVERNMENT, AND
AZOREAN AND MADEIRAN LEADERS ON MAR 15 TO DISCUSS SEPARATISM
AND WAYS TO IMPROVE COORDINATION BETWEEN CENTRAL AND
REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS. THE PRESIDENT IS CONCERNED THAT THE
COMMUNISTS AND FAR LEFT HAVE JOINED THE FAR RIGHT IN
SUPPORT OF SEPARATISM. END SUMMARY.

1. AZORES AND MADEIRA SUMMIT: PRESIDENT EANES MAR 15 CONVENED A
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HIGH-LEVEL MEETING TO DISCUSS "THE POLITICAL SITUATION
IN THE AZORES AND MADEIRA AND THE MOST EFFICIENT MEANS OF
COORDINATION BETWEEN THE CENTRAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS."
PARTICIPANTS WERE THE PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER SOARES, PSD
LEADER SA CARNEIRO, CDS LEADER FREITAS AMARAL, AZOREAN REGIONAL
GOVERNMENT PRESIDENT MOTA AMARAL, MADEIRAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
PRESIDENT ORNELAS CAMACHO; PLUS MINISTERS OF THE REPUBLIC

FOR THE AZORES AND MADEIRA GALVAO DE FIGUEIREDO AND LINO MIGUEL. THE PCP AND UDP WERE NOT INVITED. FOLLOWING THE MEETING MOTA AMARAL SAID THAT SEPARATIST ACTIVITIES AND VIOLENCE HAD BEEN DISCUSSED. CDS LEADER FREITAS DO AMARAL NOTED THAT SEPARATISM AND INCREASED DECENTRALIZATION OF SERVICES WERE THE PRINCIPAL TOPICS.

2. VIOLENCE IN THE AZORES: THE PONTA DELGADA HOME OF SOCIALIST PARTY DEPUTY JAIME GAMA WAS DESTROYED BY ARSONISTS EARLY MAR 15 (REFTEL. GAMA AND HIS FAMILY WERE IN LISBON WHERE THEY NORMALLY RESIDE AND NO ONE WAS INJURED. MOTA AMARAL, THE AZOREAN PSD, AND THE PSD NATIONAL COMMITTEE CONDEMNED THE ACT. THE PSD PARLIAMENTARY GROUP IN THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY SPONSORED A MOTION CONDEMNING "TERRORIST VIOLENCE DIRECTED BY EXTREMIST GROUPS, SPECIFICALLY SEPARATISTS." THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MAR 15 ALSO APPROVED LEGISLATION INCREASING POLICE FORCES IN THE AZORES AND MADEIRA.

3. CDS ON GALVAO DE MELO: A CDS INSIDER TOLD EMBOFF MAR 15 THAT REITAS DO AMARAL WOULD MEET WITH GEN GALVAO DE MELO, AN INDEPENDENT DEPUTY IN THE CDS PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION, THE FOLLOWING DAY TO URGE RESTRAINT BY MELO IN HIS DEALINGS WITH RETURNEES. AMARAL HAS EXPRESSED HIS DISSATISFACTION WITH MELO ON SEVERAL RECENT OCCASIONS, BUT HAS HAD LITTLE SUCCESS IN MODERATING MELO'S BEHAVIOR. THE CDS IS CONCERNED THAT MELO'S INFLAMMATORY REMARKS ON DECOLONIZATION CONTRIBUTE TO MILITARY UNREST.

4. ASSEMBLY HEARING ON ECONOMIC MEASURES: THE ASSEMBLY DEBATE REQUESTED BY THE PSD ON THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC MEASURES
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BEGIN MAR 16. THE PSD AND CDS ARE EXPECTED TO SUPPORT THE ECONOMIC MEASURES WITH THE PCP AND UDP IN OPPOSITION.

5. COMMENT: MARIO SAORES TOLD THE AMBASSADOR MAR 15 THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD CALLED THE SUMMIT MEETING ON THE AZORES AND MADEIRA BECAUSE HE WAS CONCERNED THAT THE FAR RIGHT AND THE FAR LEFT WERE COMING TOGETHER IN SUPPORT OF SEPARATISM. DEFENSE MINISTER FIRMINO MIGUEL TOLD THE DCM MAR 9 THAT THE PCP WAS SUPPORTING SEPARATISM. THERE HAVE BEEN ALLEGATIONS OF COMMUNIST AND SOVIET BLOC SUPPORT FOR SEPARATIST ACTIVITIES FOR SOME TIME. THE COMMUNISTS AND THE FAR LEFT SHARE A COMMON INTEREST WITH THE FARRIGHT IN CAUSING TROUBLE ON THE ISLANDS.

6. ROLE OF GALVAO DE MELO WITH RETURNEES IS INCREASINGLY SENSITIVE AND IMPORTANT. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HE WILL BE CONTENDER AGAINST CDS VICE PRESIDENT AMARO DA COSTA FOR CDS PRESIDENCY IF FREITAS DO AMARAL DECIDES TO GIVE UP PRESIDENCY WHEN HE TAKES ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM JOB UNDER EANES.
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